

The rights and benefits we enjoy today were not simply handed to working men and women; they had to be won. Brick by brick, America's labor unions helped raise the landmarks of middle-class security: the 40-hour workweek and weekends, paid leave and pensions, the minimum wage and health insurance, Social Security and Medicare. These are the victories that make our Nation's promise possible—the idea that if we work hard and play by the rules, we can make a better life for ourselves and our families.

I am committed to preserving the collective bargaining rights that helped build the greatest middle class the world has ever known. It is the fundamental right of every American to have a voice on the job, and a chance to negotiate for fair pay, safe working conditions, and a secure retirement. When we uphold these basic principles, our middle class grows and everybody prospers.

Our Nation faces tough times, but I have never stopped betting on the American worker. This is the labor force that revolutionized the assembly line and built the arsenal of democracy that defeated fascism in World War II. These are the workers who built our homes, highways, and rail lines, who educate our children and care for the sick. American workers have taken us through the digital revolution and into a 21st-century economy. As my Administration fights to create good jobs and restore the American dream, I am confident that, together, we will emerge from today's challenges as we always have—stronger than ever before.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 3, 2012, as Labor Day. I call upon all public officials and people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities that honor the contributions and resilience of working Americans.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirty-first day of August, in the year of our Lord two thousand twelve, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-seventh.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8858 of September 7, 2012

National Grandparents Day, 2012

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Throughout our history, grandparents have guided their children and grandchildren through trial and triumph. For many of us, our grandparents were among our earliest teachers and caregivers. They have added immeasurably to the strength of our families, and with compassion and wisdom, they have enriched our lives with the stories of those who came before us. On National Grandparents Day, we give thanks to those who helped raise us and pay tribute to a generation that still inspires us toward brighter horizons.

Our grandparents set the course of an American century. They have witnessed great milestones in our Nation's history, and from the battlefield to the factory floor to their neighborhoods, our grandparents' tireless pursuit of progress has paved the road that we travel today. Just as they helped shape the country we know and love, so have they shaped each of us into who we are as individuals. Our grandmothers and grandfathers have profoundly influenced every part of our society, and as their grandchildren, it is incumbent upon all of us to provide them with the care and support they so deeply deserve.

Today, we honor America's grandparents, and we celebrate their indelible contributions to family, community, and country.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 9, 2012, as National Grandparents Day. I call upon all Americans to take the time to honor their own grandparents and those in their community.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this seventh day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand twelve, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-seventh.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8859 of September 7, 2012

National Days of Prayer and Remembrance, 2012

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Eleven years ago, America confronted one of our darkest days. The events of September 11, 2001, brought collapsing towers in Manhattan and billowing smoke at the Pentagon, wreckage on a Pennsylvania field, and deep ache to the soul of our Nation. Nearly 3,000 innocent people lost their lives that morning; still more gave theirs in service during the hours, days, and years that followed. All were loved, and none will be forgotten. On these days of prayer and remembrance, we mourn again the men, women, and children who were taken from us with terrible swiftness, stand with their friends and family, honor the courageous patriots who responded in our country's moment of need, and, with God's grace, rededicate ourselves to a spirit of unity and renewal.

Those who attacked us sought to deprive our Nation of the very ideals for which we stand—but in the aftermath of this tragedy, the American people kept alive the virtues and values that make us who we are and who we must always be. Today, the legacy of September 11 is one of rescue workers who rushed to the scene, firefighters who charged up the stairs, passengers who stormed the cockpit—courageous individuals who put their lives on the line to save people they never knew. It is also a legacy of those who stood up to serve in our Armed Forces. In the 11 years since that day, more than 2 million American service members have gone to war. They